

ARIZONA VETERANS TASK FORCE

Friday, September 9, 2005 - 1:00 p.m.
Governor's 2nd Floor Conference Room
1700 W. Washington - Phoenix, AZ 85007

MINUTES

OPENING REMARKS & ROLL CALL

Chair Pat Chorpenning called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Members Present:

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|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| ➤ Patrick F. Chorpenning, Chair | ➤ Rebecca J. Phifer |
| ➤ Joe P. Bibich | ➤ Dora Schriro |
| ➤ George J. Heaney | ➤ Joan E. Sisco |
| ➤ Avtar Khalsa | ➤ Caryn R. Walsh |
| ➤ Ezra Loring | ➤ Gary M. Yaquinto |
| ➤ Georganna Meyer | |

The Arizona Veterans Task Force members introduced themselves. The Governor has demonstrated her commitment to assembling an effective Veterans Task Force by naming three of her cabinet members and other appointees who are uniquely qualified to serve. Pursuant to ARS §41-604.e., Chairman Chorpenning called together leadership from four veterans service organizations to participate in the process by serving on the Arizona Veterans Council. The organizations are the American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Military Order of the Purple Heart, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Council members consist of commanders, immediate past commanders, senior vice commanders and adjutants from each organization.

Overview of Veterans Task Force Meetings

Mike Klier, Assistant Deputy Director - Arizona Department of Veterans' Services (ADVS), started the meeting with a PowerPoint presentation that described the agenda for each of the five meetings for the Arizona Veterans Task Force.

The future meetings will be held in the Governor's 2nd Floor Conference Room at the following dates and times:

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| Wednesday | October 5, 2005 | 1:00p – 4:00p |
| Wednesday | November 2, 2005 | 1:00p – 4:00p |
| Wednesday | November 30, 2005 | 1:00p – 4:00p |
| Thursday | December 15, 2005 | 1:00p – 4:00p |

Benefits available to Arizona veterans:

- If 100% disabled, the veteran may receive a hunting and fishing license at no cost.
- If one of the three Congressional Medal of Honor recipients, that veteran is given a license plate (although he must pay registration costs).
- If 100% disabled, the veteran's cost for registering one vehicle in the family is waived.

A motion was made and unanimously carried to name Becky Phifer as the Co-Chair for the Arizona Veterans' Task Force, in keeping with Executive Order 2005-15.

Governor Addresses the Members

Governor Janet Napolitano thanked the members for accepting her appointment to serve and highlighted some of the areas where past and present military might be served by the Task Force. The essence of the executive order is to see what Arizona offers to its veterans, what other states do for their veterans, and to ensure that Arizona stands out as serving its veterans the best.

Defining the Veteran and VA Benefit Application

Jon Skelly, Assistant Director of the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Regional Office – Phoenix, provided a technical definition of a veteran. The definition has evolved over the 75 years since the original VA definition was prepared and 15 years of court precedence, making the definition extremely complex.

Socioeconomic Status of Veterans

Mike Klier, ADVS, offered a less technical definition of a veteran. Arizona's veteran population has steadily increased; as evidenced by the 1980, 1990, and 2000 census. While the population estimate is difficult, he encouraged the Task Force to focus on treating its veterans properly. Unlike the Vietnam War, society has learned to separate its feelings about the war from how it views the warrior.

Impact of Veterans to Arizona Economy

Gary Noviello, ADVS Chief Financial Officer/Assistant Director – Fiduciary, presented information about how Arizona's economy is affected by its veteran population.

Veterans Education

Mike Fugate, ADVS Office of Veterans Education Administrator, discussed educational benefits for active duty, Reserve, and National Guard personnel. Every dollar invested in veterans' education has a return of \$7, because of the veterans' increased earning capacity.

Call from the Public

Chairman Chorpenning invited the audience to ask questions or make comments. There was one who offered questions or comments.

Chairman Chorpenning requested that issues and questions be sent to the Veterans Task Force.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:23 p.m.